

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached hereto are two (2) replacement drawing sheets and one (1) new drawing sheet that comply with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. These drawing sheets incorporate the following drawing changes:

In Fig. 1, reference numeral --12b-- has been added to indicate the diffuser sheet peripheral wall, and reference numeral --13b-- has been added to indicate the closure shell peripheral wall; and

In Fig. 5, reference numeral "125" indicating a communication hole has been amended to --124-- because the same reference number has been used to indicate a retainer.

New Fig. 7, which shows the features described in page 30, lines 14-18, has been added.

It is respectfully requested that the replacement and new drawing sheets be approved and made a part of the record of the above-identified application.

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application.

Specification and Claims

Minor changes have been made to the specification and claims to place them in better form for U.S. practice.

Substitute Specification

The above-noted specification changes are set forth in the attached Substitute Specification. The Substitute Specification does not contain new matter.

A Comparison Specification showing the matter being added to and deleted from the original specification is also submitted herewith.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve the Substitute Specification.

Drawings

Minor changes have been made to Figs. 1 and 5 so that they are consistent with the disclosure of the present application.

New Fig. 7, which shows the features described in page 30, lines 14-18, have been added.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve and enter these drawing changes.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, because of some informalities.

The Examiner states that the phrase “the lower end opening peripheral edge of the inner cylindrical shielding plate comes into contact with housing ceiling surface, the upper end opening peripheral edge of the inner cylindrical shielding plate comes into contact with housing ceiling surface . . .” is unclear.

Claim 3 has been amended to claim, “the inner cylindrical shielding plate extend substantially along an entire length of the inner peripheral surface of the cylindrical filter, and the upper end opening peripheral edge side of the inner cylindrical shielding plate has a vent hole,” to overcome this rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing limitation is clearly supported by the statements in page 30, lines 14-18 of the specification that

The same state as shown in Fig. 1 may be obtained by first covering the entire inner peripheral surface of the filter 65 with the inner cylindrical shielding plate 66 and providing at a portion of the filter 65 with plural vent holes.

Further, new Fig. 7, which shows this feature has been added to overcome this rejection. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3/1, 5, 8/1, 8/5, 11/1, 11/5, 14/1, and 14/5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Katsuda et al. (USP 6,129,381). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Katsuda discloses, in Fig. 1, a gas generator having a housing 3, an inner cylindrical member 16 provided inside the housing 3, a coolant/filter 7, a plate member 32 having a circular portion 36 in contact with an upper inner surface of the housing 3 and a circumferential wall portion 34 in contact with an inner surface of the coolant/filter 7, and a plate member 33 having a circular area 50 in contact with a lower inner surface of the housing 3 and a circumferential wall portion 51 in contact with the inner surface of the coolant/filter 7.

According to the Examiner, the plate members 32 and 33 correspond to the “inner cylindrical shielding plate.”

Applicants, however, respectfully submit that Katsuda does not have a gap “provided between an inner peripheral surface of the cylindrical filter and an outer peripheral surface of the inner cylindrical shielding plate,” as required in claim 1.

Claims 3, 8, 11, and 14, dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

Claim 5 is allowable at least for the similar reasons as stated in the foregoing with regard to claim 1.

Claims 8, 11, and 14, dependent on claim 5, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 5.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 12/1, 12/5, 13/1, and 13/5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katsuda. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 12 and 13, dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

Claims 12 and 13, dependent on claim 5, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 5.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 4, 6-7, 8/2, 9, 10, 11/2, 12/2, 13/2, and 14/2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent claim form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 2 should be allowable because it is an independent claim.

Claims 4, 8/2, 11/2, 12/2, 13/2, and 14/2, variously dependent on claim 2, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 2.

Claims 6, 7, 9, and 10, variously dependent on claim 5, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 5.

A favorable determination by the Examiner and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Conclusion

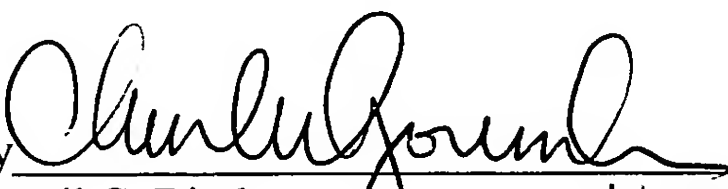
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections, and allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi (#40,417) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 7, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments: Two (2) Replacement Drawing Sheets - Figs. 1 and 5  
One (1) New Drawing Sheet - Fig. 7  
Substitute Specification - 29 pages  
Comparison Specification - 30 pages